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TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 1, 1953

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SUBJECT: Fortnightly Newsletter - May 18 - 30, 1953.

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POLITICAL

Kano and Northern Region Quiet

Since serious Kano outbreak of May 16th and 17th no further outbreaks in North. Pleas Northern leaders for cool headedness, and Southern politicos withdrawal Northern speaking plans appear to have played important part in ending immediate danger further rioting against Southerners in North.

Northern House Assembly Asks Weaker Central Government

House adjourned after short session. Most significant action passage resolution calling for eight revisions present Nigerian government. Points include abandonment central House of Reps and substitution all-Nigeria "commission" to advise Governor; granting more powers to Regions, leaving to center only such national matters as foreign relations and other problems common interest; and separate Civil Service for North completely controlled by North government. Resolution not surprising as follows line Northern leaders have expressed since last session House of Representatives and embodies solution to present problem suggested by varied groups. Reaction to resolution mixed, but NCNC and Action Group still considering definite policy toward above suggestions. Resolution has led, as expected, to newspaper charges Northerners tools of "British Raj" in acting to preserve British toehold and influence in North.

Colonial Office Plans Conferences in re Nigerconstitution Revision

Announcement made of Secretary of State for Colonies plans call London conference to consider what, if any, revisions Nigerian constitution needed. No date yet, but reported preliminary meeting soon to determine type revision conventions needed and groups to be consulted. About 13 Nigerians to be invited: 3 from Action Group

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Action Group (including Obafemi AWOLOWO); 3 from Northern Peoples' Congress (including Sardauna of Sokoto); 3 from NCNC (including Nnamdi AZIKIWE); 2 from National Independence Party; 1 from Northern Elements Progressive Union; 1 from British Cameroons. Both Action Group and NCNC complaining at representation NIP. No indication whether all invitations will be accepted if proffered.

Action Group and NCNC leaders holding secret meetings to determine final attitude toward North's proposal for greater regionalisation and toward above conference and its contents. Leaks from meetings indicate some difficulties agreement between two parties.

Coronation Day Political Meeting Banned

Application for permit hold public meeting (Youths Mourning Day) on June 2 in memory Kano dead refused by Lagos police. Action Group youth, NCNC Youth Association and secretary NEPU jointly planned meeting. Seven leaders of group to go to court June 1 on charges intended commit breach of public peace; police to ask Court put leaders on £200 bond that they will abstain any such actions during Coronation celebrations.

Rumors persist in Lagos that "trouble" likely during two-day Coronation holiday.

Western Region Ministries to be Established

First Ministries for Western Region scheduled to begin operation June 1. Ministries of Local Government and of Lands to be first two. Ministers will have Permanent Secretaries and other trappings of ministries, to replace present function of Regional Secretariat in operations. Both at Center and in East and West Regions Nigerians have complained at continuance Secretariat system as obstacle to Nigerianization of government.

NCNC Party Member to Seek Separate Cameroons Legislature

Mr. N. N. MBILE, House of Representatives member from Kumba, British Cameroons, has announced he will propose resolution next session House of Representatives asking full Region status for British Cameroons, including legislature and budgetary autonomy. Mbile is stalwart member NCNC and remained in party through Eastern crisis. Says "peculiar position" as Trust territory makes request desirable. Also claims it "unanimous wish and desire of the representatives and inhabitants of the territory"; a statement which would be most difficult to substantiate.

Zik

Zik Enterprises Sued for Libel Again

Eleven leaders of Action Group, including Oni of Ife, A. M. A. AKINLOYE, S. L. AKINTOLA, Chief Arthur PREST and C. D. AKRAN, have brought suit for libel in sum £25,000 each against Azikiwe's Zik Enterprises Ltd., publishers of West African Pilot. Suits result of cutting remarks made about Action Groupers in Pilot recently. Possibly encouraged by fact Awolowo recently awarded £2,920 damages in suit against same parties for same offense. Libel suits seem to be major source of excitement for Action Group politicos.

Nigerian Labor Leader in Court in Case Involving American Visa

Michael A. O. IMOUDU, erstwhile Nigerian "labor leader," bound over to court for June 15th on charges receiving £15 in return promise obtain British passport for potential Nigerian student-visitor to U.S.A. and receiving from same Nigerian additional £5 to pay for entertaining American Vice Consul at Island Club to soften up that officer for issuance visa. No Consulate General officer contacted Imoudu in this matter and police feel they sure conviction in case.

American Consul General on Nigerian Tour

Consul General E. P. KEELER on auto trip May 17th to June 1st visiting Ibadan, Bida, Jos, Kaduna, Enugu, Onitsha, Benin City and other localities. Purpose is first survey trip important areas his district.

ECONOMIC

Shelloil Claims £5 Million Spent in Exploration in Nigeria

Shell-D'Arcy announces company has spent this amount over past several years in exploration for oil in Southern Nigeria. Says currently drilling two deep-tests, one at Amansiodo, west of Enugu, and second at Akata in Calabar Province. Shallow borehole also being drilled south of Auchi. Third deep-test scheduled soon near Ogbabu, north of Okigwi. Geophysical parties active in Illah vicinity, north of Onitsha, in Kabba, in Benue Province, and in Owerri and Warri provinces. Geological field-parties now in Calabar, Ogoja and Benin Provinces. Company has also photographed, from air, large areas, including whole Niger Delta country.

New Cable

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New Cable Station for Lagos

Station expected be completed by end 1953 in Ikoyi section of Lagos. New station to cover ten acres, with modern facilities including large rhomboid aerials for improved reception. Phototelegraph services to be offered between Nigeria and UK.

Main Crop Cocoa Purchases Almost Completed

Nigeria Cocoa Marketing Board has purchased 100,380 long tons (to April 2) main crop cocoa and 980 tons light crop. Further purchases main crop expected be very small.

Erwin P. Keeler.
Erwin P. Keeler
American Consul General

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